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Early rains bring tears for onion farmers

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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Speaker revokes suspension of 18 BJP MLAs from Assembly

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

Assembly Speaker UT Khader on Sunday revoked the six-month suspension of 18 BJP MLAs, imposed on 21 March for alleged indiscipline and disrespect towards the Speaker during the Budget session. The decision followed a high-level meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his Deputy DK Shivakumar, Leader of Opposition R Ashoka and Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil.

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Assembly bypolls to 4 seats in 5 states on 19 June

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Bypolls to five Assembly seats in four States will be held on 19 June, the Election Commission said on Sunday. While two assembly bypolls will be held in Gujarat, one each will take place in Kerala, West Bengal and Punjab. The counting of votes will take place on 23 June, authority said. In Gujarat, bypoll to the Kadi seat was necessitated following the death of MLA Karsanbhai Punjabhai Solanki. Another to the Visavadar seat in the State is taking place due to the resignation of Bhayani Bhupendrabhai Gandubhai. In Kerala, Nilambur seat will go to bypoll since PV Anvar has resigned, while byposs are to be held in Punjab's Ludhiana seat due to the death of member Gurpreet Bassi Gogi. Byelection to Kaliganj Assembly seat in West Bengal has been necessitated due to the death of Nasiruddin Ahamed. ***—PTI***

Oil leak feared as Liberian ship sinks near Kerala

KOCHI, 25 MAY

A Liberian cargo ship, carrying 640 containers including 13 with hazardous cargo, capsized and sank in the sea off the state's coast in the early hours of Sunday, and the incident has led to a major oil leak, a top official said. The Kerala government has sounded a statewide alert, and fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea, and the Coast Guard is working to contain the spill. With the rescue of 3 more crew members by a Navy ship, all the 24-member crew have been rescued. ***—PTI***

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Canopy collapses at Delhi's airport amid rains

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

A section of the canopy at Terminal 1 (T1) of Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport partially collapsed on Sunday morning due to heavy rains and strong winds, according to sources. The terminal, recently reopened for flight operations, is the largest and busiest in India. The Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) reported that the design of the external tensile fabric allowed for adjustments under pressure to aid water dispersion, indicating no structural compromise to the terminal itself. Fortunately, no injuries were reported in the incident. The intense thunderstorm, which occurred overnight on 24 May, resulted in over 80 mm of rainfall and wind speeds reaching 70-80 km/h. This led to the diversion of 49 flights, including 17 international ones, between 11.30pm on Saturday and 4 am on Sunday.***—PTI***

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NITI Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam, Vice Chairperson Suman Bery and member VK Paul during a press briefing on NITI Council meeting ***PHOTO: PTI***

India beats Japan to become 4th largest economy: NITI Aayog

NITI CEO says India is now $4T economy

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

India has become the world's fourth-largest economy, overtaking Japan, according to NITI Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam. "We are a USD 4 trillion economy as I speak," he said, citing recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) data.

Until 2024, India was ranked fifth globally. Now, only the US, China, and Germany are ahead. Subrahmanyam said that if India continues on its current trajectory, it could become the third-largest economy within 2.5 to 3 years.

The IMF's World Economic Outlook (WEO) report released in April estimated India's GDP for 2025 at USD 4.19 trillion, marginally ahead of Japan's projected GDP of USD 4.187 trillion. It also noted India's per capita income has

doubled over the past decade, from USD 1,438 in 2013–14 to USD 2,880 in 2025.

India's economy is projected to grow at 6.2 per cent in 2025–26, slightly lower than earlier projections due to rising global trade tensions and economic uncertainty. However, the IMF noted India's growth remains stable, driven by strong private consumption, particularly in rural areas.

Global growth, by contrast, is forecast at 2.8 per cent in 2025 and 3 per cent in 2026.

NITI Aayog's approach paper, 'Viksit Rajya for Viksit Bharat @ 2047', highlights India's transformation from being part of the so-called 'fragile five' to one of the world's top five economies within a decade. The paper envisions India as a USD 30 trillion economy and a high-income country by 2047, with per capita income comparable to current high-income nations (defined by the World Bank as over USD 14,005 annually).

To achieve this, NITI Aayog outlines a strategic framework built on six key pillars: Macro-Economic Goals and Strategy, Empowered Citizens, a Thriving and Sustainable Economy, Technology and Innovation Leadership, Global Leadership (Vishwa Bandhu), and Enabling Factors such as Governance, Security, and Justice Delivery. ***—PTI***

SUNDAY SOAK

Women rush to seek shelter from a sudden downpour at Summanahalli Bridge in Bengaluru on Sunday. IMD has predicted moderate to heavy showers across the City till May end ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*** ***>>>More On Page 2***

India, Russia to make advanced BrahMos missile

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

Negotiations are underway between India and Russia to jointly manufacture an advanced version of the BrahMos missile system.

According to reports, the two countries are engaged in the initial talks, with Moscow pledging full technical support for the project.

The technologically advanced BrahMos missile will be manufactured in a facility in Uttar Pradesh's Lucknow. The facility that was set up at a cost of Rs 300 crore, will be exclusively producing missiles.

The advanced version of the missile will have a range of 290–400 km and a high speed of Mach 2.8. The missile has been manufactured by BrahMos Aerospace, an Indo-Russian multinational aerospace and defence company.

It can be launched from land, sea or air with a 'fire and forget' system.

PHOTO: PTI

Russian weapons systems find a pride of place among India's defence resources. The T-90S Bhishma and T-72M1 Ajeya tanks and rocket artilleries like BM-21 Grad and 9A52 Smerch are integral parts of the Indian Army's armoured units.

The Indian Air Force owns the S-400 Triumf and short-range systems such as the OSA-AK and Strela-10, though the Sukhoi Su-30MKI remains the main combat aircraft of its fighter fleet, followed by MiG-29 and MiG-21 Bison aircraft. Rotary-wing assets comprise the Mil Mi-17 and Mi-26 helicopters.

India has been gradually decreasing its dependence on other countries for defence equipment. In fact 65 per cent of such equipment are indigenously manufactured.

India plans to reach Rs 3 trillion in defence production by 2029. Around 670,000 AK-203 assault rifles will be manufactured in a joint venture in Uttar Pradesh's Amethi. ***—Agencies***

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor with Shiv Sena MP Milind Deora and others pays tribute at the National September 11 Memorial, during their visit as part of a multi-party delegation in New York ***PHOTO: PTI***

Pak will pay a higher price for terror: Tharoor in US

NEW YORK, 25 MAY

India has demonstrated that Pakistan will have to pay an increasingly higher price for backing terror attacks against the country because Islamabad has failed to display any seriousness about tackling terrorism, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, the leader of an all-party delegation visiting the US, said on Sunday.

"I don't work for the government," Tharoor stated, addressing Indian-Americans and think tanks in New York. "But I said after the 22 April attack that the time had come to hit hard, hit smart. I'm pleased India did exactly that."

Operation Sindoor, India's retaliatory strike, targeted terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, following the killing of 26 civilians, including one Nepalese citizen, in Pahalgam—a massacre for which The Resistance Front initially claimed responsibility.

Tharoor underlined that India's response was precise, restrained, and aimed solely at terrorists, not a prelude to war. "We have a right to self-defence. We exercised it responsibly."

He emphasised India's long-standing efforts through diplomacy and global institutions to curb cross-border terror, saying Pakistan remains in denial and continues to shelter terrorists.

Tharoor reiterated India's desire for peace and growth. "We're not interested in warfare. We want to grow our economy, not covet anyone else's territory." The delegation, including MPs from BJP, JMM, TDP, Shiv Sena, and ex-envoy Taranjit Sandhu, will return to the US on 3 June. ***—PTI***

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China helping Pak with nukes: US report

New Delhi, 25 May

Pakistan is modernising its nuclear arsenal with military and economic support from China, and continues to view India as an existential threat, a US intel report said.

"Pakistan regards India as an existential threat and will continue to pursue its military modernisation effort, including the development of battlefield nuclear weapons, to offset India's conventional military advantage," said the latest World Threat Assessment report released by the US Defence Intelligence Agency on Sunday.

—Agencies

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PHOTO: FREEPIKAI

FROM 1 JUNE

Vidhana Soudha starts guided public tours

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

The Vidhana Soudha guided walking tours, a first-of-its-kind experience that invites public to step inside Karnataka's seat of legislative power, were launched on Sunday.

The initiative by Department of Tourism and Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation, in coordination with the Speaker's Office–Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, and Vidhana Soudha security division, will be open to the public from 1 June.

The tours will be conducted on 2nd and 4th Saturdays, and all Sundays of every month, from 8am to 5pm, officials said.

An introductory ticket price of Rs 50 has been fixed for individuals aged 16 and above, while children aged 15 and below can book tickets for free.

Assembly Speaker UT Khader, Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti, Tourism Minister HK Patil and others at the launch of the Vidhana Soudha Guided Walking Tour in Bengaluru on Sunday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

At the launch, Speaker UT Khader said, "The Vidhana Soudha guided walking tour is a unique initiative designed to immerse citizens in the rich legacy of Karnataka's democratic heritage. These tours stand as a testament to our commitment to transparency, civic engagement, and the preservation of our historical narrative."

Karnataka Minister for Law & Parliamentary Affairs, Legislation and Tourism, HK Patil, said, "Vidhana Soudha is the living story of our State's democratic journey. Opening its corridors to the public is a celebration of transparency, heritage, and civic pride."

The guided walking tour offers exclusive insights into the building's historical significance, architectural marvels, and key areas within the complex. Each group will be accompanied by a trained tour guide and a Tourist Mitra (tourist police).

The 90-minute guided tour will be conducted in Kannada and English, covering an approximate distance of 1.5 km on foot.

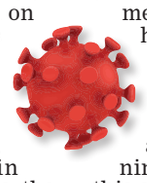
However, State BJP President BY Vijayendra criticised the move, claiming the State government is facing "financial distress" and has now resorted to charging visitors to enter Vidhana Soudha. ***—PTI***

B'luru hospitals gear up for Covid booster dose

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

As concerns grow over the JN1 variant, private hospitals in Bengaluru are gearing up for a potential advisory on administering a fresh Covid-19 booster dose.

Shobha Prakash, President of the Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association (PHANA), told Salar News on Sunday that while data on the JN1 variant remains limited, hospitals have already begun precautionary measures. Karnataka has 38 active Covid cases, including 32 in Bengaluru, according to the health department.



"People are now more aware of preventive steps such as wearing masks, using sanitisers, and maintaining distance," Prakash said. "Given our past experience, a repeat of earlier devastation is unlikely." Though the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has not issued formal directives, hospitals have voluntarily revived safety protocols. Unlike earlier waves where 50 per cent of beds were designated for isolation, hospitals will now reserve beds based on individual capacity.

Discussions among private hospital boards are ongoing through calls and online meetings, with a comprehensive plan expected after a meeting on Monday.

Prakash also confirmed cases involving a pregnant woman and a nine-month-old infant. "In this context, it is advisable to avoid large gatherings, use face mask while travelling and consult doctors for symptoms like cough, cold, or fever." With immunity from earlier vaccines possibly waning, a new booster may be necessary, she added. However an ICMR guideline is awaited. ***— Salar News***

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TN man dies in crash near Electronics City

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

A 39-year-old man from Tamil Nadu, who had come to the city to visit his relatives, was killed in a road accident on Saturday night near the Electronic City flyover. The deceased Ramesh Jyothimani is a resident of Krishnagiri district. According to Madiwala traffic police, the incident occurred around 10.15pm near Konena Agrahara, where Ramesh had alighted from a bus. As he tried to cross near the flyover entry point, a speeding two-wheeler struck him. The impact of the collision flung him onto the road, leaving him critically injured. The biker fled. Passersby rushed Jyothimani to St John's Hospital, but he was declared brought dead. Madiwala police are investigating to trace the motorcyclist and determine if negligence or rash driving was involved —*Salar News*

Tiger found dead after territorial fight in Nagarahole

MYSURU, 25 MAY

A tiger was found dead on Sunday in the Muddanahalli forest area, on the fringes of Nagarahole Tiger Reserve in Hunsur taluk. Forest officials suspect the big cat may have succumbed to injuries sustained during a territorial fight with another tiger. Interestingly, the carcass—stained with blood—was discovered near a canal, close to where a cow was killed by a tiger last week, raising further suspicion. Upon receiving the alert, Nagarahole Tiger Reserve Project Director and Deputy Conservator of Forests P A Seema, Range Forest Officer P A Subramani, and veterinarians including Dr Ramesh inspected the site. A post-mortem was conducted in accordance with National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) guidelines, and the carcass was later cremated in the presence of senior forest officials. —*Salar News*

CCB raids illegal hookah bar in Mangaluru mall

MANGALURU, 25 MAY

An illegal hookah bar operating under the guise of a café was raided by the City Central Crime Branch (CCB) inside the parking area of Mak Mall, Kankanady, officials confirmed. The raid took place on Saturday evening and targeted 'Black Moon Resto Café', which held a valid trade licence from the Mangaluru City Corporation for operating a cafeteria during 2023–24. However, it was allegedly functioning as a hookah bar in violation of legal norms. Three individuals—Siddiq alias MFC Siddiq, Abdul Nasir, and Safwan—have been booked in connection with the case. Police seized hookah apparatus and tobacco products from the premises. Preliminary investigations indicate the accused were enticing young people and profiting illegally while promoting substance abuse. The operation was carried out under the direction of Assistant Commissioner of Police Manoj Kumar Naik, and led by Inspector Rafiq KM. The team included Sub-Inspector Sudeep M V, Assistant Sub-Inspector Sujan Shetty, Sub-Inspector Manohar Prasad, Sharana Bhandari, and personnel from the CCB and Mangaluru East police station. An official press release was issued on Sunday. —*PTI*

Amid rising Covid cases, Rao says govt taking all measures

State has 38 active Covid cases, including 32 in City

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

Amid a slight rise in Covid-19 cases, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao on Sunday said the State is taking all necessary precautionary measures, including targeted testing, and there is no cause for panic.

The remarks came after the death of an 84-year-old man with multiple comorbidities who had tested positive for Covid-19. "He had several underlying conditions, including heart disease, TB, and a hip replacement. An audit has been ordered, and we cannot attribute the death solely to Covid," Rao said.

The minister emphasised that the current situation does not warrant restrictions. Karnataka has 38 active Covid cases, including 32 in Bengaluru, according to the health department.

Testing has been mandated for Severe Acute Respiratory Infections (SARI) and Influenza-Like Illnesses (ILI), particularly among the elderly and children. RT-PCR kits are being distributed to government and private hospitals, and testing is being ramped up.

Testing has been mandated for Severe Acute Respiratory Infections and Influenza-Like Illnesses **PHOTO: PTI**

"There is no negligence. Weekly technical advisory meetings have been scheduled, and we are in constant touch with the Centre," Rao stated. "We must not create panic. No lockdowns or travel restrictions are necessary at this point."

Rao also said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is closely monitoring the situation and has instructed that Karnataka should not lag behind in preventive efforts.

Regarding the recently identified JN1 variant, Rao said there have been no reports of severe effects in India or abroad, and no booster dose is currently needed.

The Centre has advised states to monitor and test, particularly high-risk individuals who are encouraged to wear masks.

On schools, Rao said no decision has been made yet. "We will observe the situation for a few more days before taking a call," he added.

Private testing rates may be reviewed depending on testing demand in the coming days. —*PTI*

'RIFT IN CONG'

BJP alleges real estate mafia over Ramanagara renaming, blames DKS

MYSURU, 25 MAY

State BJP President BY Vijayendra on Sunday strongly the government's decision to rename Ramanagara district as 'Bengaluru South', alleging the move was made to benefit the real estate mafia.

Speaking to reporters in Mysuru, Vijayendra claimed the renaming serves no administrative purpose and was aimed at facilitating real estate growth around Bengaluru. He alleged that the decision revealed internal differences between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. "Though the Chief Minister was reportedly not in favour, the district was renamed to please the Shivakumar," he said.

He further accused Congress leaders of being "allergic" to the name Ramanagara due to its association with Lord Rama.

Vijayendra also opposed the government's appointment of actress Tamannaah Bhatia as brand ambassador for Mysore Sandal Soap, produced by Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Ltd. "The State has many nationally and internationally recognised personalities. The government should clarify on whose recommendation her name was chosen—possibly Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan's," he alleged. He added that the BJP has released a chargesheet highlighting the failures of the Congress government. "It has already shaken several Congress leaders, including Siddaramaiah. We will continue to expose their failures over the next three years," he said —*Salar News*

Speaker revokes suspension of 18 BJP MLAs from Assembly

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

Assembly Speaker UT Khader on Sunday revoked the six-month suspension of 18 BJP MLAs, imposed on 21 March for alleged indiscipline and disrespect towards the Speaker during the Budget session.

The decision followed a high-level meeting with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his Deputy DK Shivakumar, Leader of Opposition R Ashoka and Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil. Khader said the MLAs had expressed regret and assured that such behaviour would not be repeated. The suspension was enforced after the BJP MLAs staged a protest inside the Assembly over 4 per cent Muslim reservation in public contracts and demanded a judicial probe into an alleged "honey-trap" case involving Cooperation Minister KN Rajanna. The protest escalated as several BJP MLAs climbed onto the podium, surrounded the Speaker's chair, and hurled papers, prompting marshals to forcibly remove them.

Khader said the decision to revoke the suspension was taken in good faith. "They are not enemies, but our colleagues. The incident happened in a fit of emotion. With trust that such behaviour will not recur, I have revoked the suspension," he said. Requests for revocation were made by Ashoka, Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, and Union Ministers Pralhad Joshi and Shobha Karandlaje. The Speaker dismissed speculation about legal pressure, affirming the Speaker's authority. The suspended MLAs were Doddanagouda Patil, Ashwath Narayan, SR Vishwanath, BA Basavaraju, MR Patil, Channabasappa, B Suresh Gowda, Umanath Kotyan, Sharanu Salagar, Shailendra Beldale, CK Ramamurthy, Yashpal Suvarna, BP Harish, Bharath Shetty, Dheeraj Muniraju, Chandru Lamani, Muniratna and Basavaraj Mattimud. —*PTI*

Thick clouds loom over Bengaluru, seen through the grand architecture of Vidhana Soudha on Sunday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Rains dampen weekend plans in City, more showers predicted

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

Light to moderate rainfall continued across Bengaluru on Sunday, dampening weekend plans and keeping the city under overcast skies.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the city recorded 2.4 mm of rainfall by 5 pm. Temperatures ranged between 21°C and 27°C, with persistent cloud cover and sporadic showers keeping conditions cool.

The IMD has forecast continued rain across Bengaluru until the end of May, warning of moderate to heavy showers over the coming days. Thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds reaching 40–50 km/h are likely, particularly during late evenings, along with brief but intense downpours and lightning.

Last week's heavy rains caused flooding in low-lying areas of the city. Since 1 March, Bengaluru has received 343 mm of rainfall—significantly above average for this period. The rainfall surge follows the earliest southwest monsoon onset in Kerala in 16 years, bringing increased activity across Karnataka.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has said it is prepared to handle waterlogging and has taken precautionary steps in vulnerable areas. Authorities have advised residents to stay indoors during thunderstorms, avoid unnecessary travel, and refrain from taking shelter under trees. Commuters are urged to exercise caution, especially during peak rain hours.

Meanwhile, the IMD has issued a red alert for coastal, south interior, and north interior Karnataka. These regions are expected to witness heavy rain, thunderstorms, and lightning, with wind speeds potentially reaching 50–60 km/h. Officials warn of possible minor damage, including fallen trees and power disruptions. —*Salar News*

State deserves better: BJP flays CM for skipping Niti meet

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

BJP on Sunday criticised Chief Minister Siddaramaiah for skipping the 10th NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting in New Delhi, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

State BJP President BY Vijayendra termed his absence a "deliberate withdrawal" from key opportunities to shape the State's future. He accused Siddaramaiah of prioritising appeasement of the Congress high command over the State's development, saying he appeared "desperate to cling to a slipping chair".

Sources close to the Chief Minister said he had a prior engagement in the state and had sent his speech to be read out at the meeting. They clarified that the absence did not amount to a boycott.

Vijayendra, in a post on 'X', said the Congress government, unable to showcase development work, regularly blames the Centre to deflect attention from its failures. "Governance is not a blame game or a chorus of complaints; it is a shared responsibility built on cooperation and commitment to the people," he stated.

He added that skipping a meeting aimed at shaping a 'Viksit Bharat @ 2047' was not just a minor oversight but a significant missed opportunity. "Karnataka deserves better," he asserted, questioning whether governance can succeed when politics is prioritised over people —*PTI*

Belagavi mutt vandalised after priest arrested for raping minor

BELAGAVI, 25 MAY

Tensions flared in Belagavi's Mekhali village of Raybag taluk after villagers vandalised the Ram Mandir Mutt following the arrest of its priest, Lokeshwar Swamy, for raping a minor girl, the daughter of a devotee.

According to police, Swamy was arrested under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and kidnapping charges at Mudalagi police station and has been remanded to judicial custody. Superintendent of Police Bhimashankar Guled confirmed that the incident took place in lodges at Bagalkot and Raichur, and the lodge owners will be interrogated after a court appeal on Monday. Police will also visit Chittapur in Kalaburagi, the accused's native place, for further investigation.

Angry locals stormed the mutt and damaged property after news of the arrest broke. Villagers alleged that Lokeshwar used the mutt for immoral activities, including witchcraft and gambling. They also claimed he threatened or attacked those who opposed him.

Apart from the Ram Mandir Mutt in Mekhali, Swamy had established another mutt — a Krishna Mutt in Hanjyanatti, Chikodi taluk — where similar allegations of misconduct have surfaced. Locals accused the swamy of prioritising illegal and immoral acts over religious activities. Despite multiple complaints to authorities in the past, locals say no action was taken. Now, they demand Swamy not be granted bail under any circumstances Police recovered deadly weapons from the mutt.—*Salar News*

Despite multiple complaints to authorities in the past, locals say no action was taken **PHOTO: SALAR**

DRUGS IN FARMHOUSE

31 detained in Devanahalli rave party bust

BENGALURU, 25 MAY

In a late-night crackdown, Devanahalli police raided an alleged "rave party" at a farmhouse near Kannamangala on the city's outskirts and detained 31 youths, including seven women, who were reportedly under the influence of narcotic substances.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team led by ACP Naveen conducted the raid around midnight, who found several youths intoxicated. The search led to the recovery of banned substances including ganja and suspected cocaine.

Police have taken the farmhouse caretaker into custody **PHOTO: SALAR**

Preliminary investigations suggest that most attendees were software engineers from other states. Blood samples have been collected from all detainees to confirm drug consumption. Residents, disturbed by loud music amid rains, alerted police suspecting illegal activity. The scene inside the farmhouse was reportedly chaotic, with liquor bottles and drug paraphernalia strewn across the premises. Bengaluru Rural Police have taken the farmhouse caretaker into custody and are interrogating him. Efforts are on to identify the organisers and the source of the narcotics supplied for the event.

Some individuals allegedly fled the scene during the raid. A case has been registered at the Devanahalli police station, and further investigation is underway. —*Salar News*

Seer walks out of Basava Jayanthi event amid BJP's sloganeering

MYSURU, 25 MAY

A Basava Jayanthi event held in Nanjangud on Sunday turned tense after supporters of State BJP President BY Vijayendra disrupted the function with loud slogans in his favour, leading to a walkout by prominent leaders including Suttur Mutt Seer Shivarathri Deshikendra Swami, Gundlupet MLA H M Ganesh Prasad, and Nanjangud MLA Darshan Dhruvanarayana.

The function, organised by the Akhila Bharatha Veerashaiva Mahasabha, was disrupted during Prasad's address when Vijayendra's supporters raised slogans. Despite appeals, they continued, prompting the revered Suttur seer to leave without offering his blessings.

Vijayendra, addressing the gathering later, expressed gratitude to the community in Nanjangud for supporting his aborted candidacy in the Varuna Assembly segment in the last polls. He hinted at future ambitions, saying he hoped for their continued support as he has "chances of becoming Chief Minister."

State Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre, speaking at the event, highlighted the enduring relevance of 12th-century reformer Basavanna's teachings. He said poverty and inequality would cease to exist if society followed Basavanna's ideals of Kayaka (dignity of labour), equality, and rejection of caste, religious, and gender discrimination. —*Salar News*

Modi to unveil projects worth Rs 77K cr in Gujarat

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch a series of projects exceeding Rs 77,400 crore during a two-day visit to his home state of Gujarat, commencing on Monday. Modi will inaugurate a locomotive manufacturing plant and flag off an electric locomotive from Dahod. In Bhuj, he will unveil additional development projects valued at over Rs 53,400 crore. On Tuesday, Modi will commemorate two decades of the Gujarat Urban Growth Story and introduce the Urban Development Year 2025 in Gandhinagar. The Dahod plant will produce 9,000 HP electric locomotives designed for energy efficiency, featuring regenerative braking systems. Modi will also launch the Vande Bharat Express between Veraval and Ahmedabad. —*PTI*

India, Maldives to review security partnership

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Maldivian counterpart Abdulla Khaleel will on Monday take stock of the implementation of the India-Maldives comprehensive economic and maritime security partnership. Khaleel, accompanied by a high-level delegation, is paying a three-day visit to India. The India-Maldives vision document on comprehensive economic and maritime security partnership was adopted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu in October last year. Foreign Minister Khaleel's visit is in continuation of "intensified high-level political exchanges" between India and Maldives, the Ministry of External Affairs said. Khaleel will lead Maldives at the second High Level Core Group meeting. —*PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Protesters, police clash at Manipur's Raj Bhavan

IMPHAL, 25 MAY

A scuffle broke out between protesters and security forces on Sunday while they were on their way to gherao the Raj Bhavan against the removal of the state's name from a government bus. The protesters responding to a call by Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity to stage mass agitation. They took a rally for 500metres before they were stopped by security. They were demanding an apology from Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla over an alleged insult to Manipur's identity. Security forces fired several rounds of tear gas shells to disperse the protesters in front of Kangla Gate, some 150metres from Raj Bhavan gate. Five protesters were admitted to hospital with injuries. —*PTI*

Govt to audit legal aid schemes ahead of 2026 deadline

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

The Indian government announced plans for an independent audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its legal aid initiatives, which are set to conclude in 2026. This evaluation will ascertain the scalability and sustainability of the programmes beyond 2026. The DISHA (Designing Innovative Solutions for Holistic Access to Justice in India) scheme, implemented by the Department of Justice in the Law Ministry, aims to enhance access to justice through three primary components: Tele-Law, Nyaya Bandhu (Pro Bono Legal Services), and Legal Literacy and Legal Awareness. The initiative has a financial allocation of Rs 250 crore for five years (2021-2026) and focuses on providing affordable legal services. The Department of Justice has issued a tender inviting proposal for the evaluation. —*PTI*

Pak making nukes with China support: US

'India views China as its main threat, Pak an ancillary security problem to be managed'

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Pakistan is modernising its nuclear arsenal with military and economic support from China, and continues to view India as an existential threat, a US intel report said.

"Pakistan regards India as an existential threat and will continue to pursue its military modernisation effort, including the development of battlefield nuclear weapons, to offset India's conventional military advantage," said the latest World Threat Assessment report released by the US Defence Intelligence Agency on Sunday. "Pakistan is modernising its nuclear arsenal and maintaining the security of its nuclear materials and nuclear command and control. Pakistan almost certainly procures WMD (Weapons of Mass Destruction) applicable goods from foreign suppliers and intermediaries."

China remains as the main supplier of military equipment, the report said.

The report noted that Pakistan was obtaining the materials for developing WMDs from China, with some shipments being routed through Hong Kong, Singapore, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates.

Pakistan regards India as an existential threat, the US Defence Intelligence Agency said PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

"However, terrorist attacks targeting Chinese workers who support China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects has emerged as a point of friction between the countries," the report added.

India meanwhile, "views China as its primary adversary and Pakistan more an ancillary security problem to be managed, despite cross-border attacks in mid-May by both India's and Pakistan's militaries".

India however, still relies on Russian spare parts to "maintain and sustain its large inventory of Russian-origin tanks and fighter aircraft that form the backbone of its military". The report noted that India has moved away from Russia under Modi, but still views the ties as essential to achieve its military and defence goals.

The report expected India to continue its "Make in India" campaign to bolster defence.

—*Salar News with Agencies*

MANN KI BAAT

Op Sindoor not just a mission, but face of changing India: PM

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that Operation Sindoor was not just a military mission, but "the face of a changing India" that reflects the country's resolve, courage, and growing strength on the global stage.

Addressing the nation through his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, Modi said, "Operation Sindoor has infused new confidence and energy into the global fight against terrorism."

Modi emphasised that the operation was not a one-off military action, but a reflection of a changing and resolute India.

"Operation Sindoor is the picture of our resolve, courage, and a changing India," he said, and delved on the impact of the operation that resonated deeply across the country.

Modi also said the collective fight against Maoism was yielding results with development and education taking the lead in areas that were under its influence.

"I want to tell you about a village where a bus arrived for the first time. The people there had been waiting for this day for years. And when the bus arrived in the village for the first time, people welcomed it to the tune of drumbeats," he said, narrating an incident in Katejhari village in Maharashtra. —*PTI*

Modi shared photos of the destroyed terrorist camps PHOTO: PTI

PM, ministers attend NDA CMs' meet

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

A day-long conclave of the NDA Chief Ministers and Deputy CMs took place in New Delhi on Sunday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his senior Cabinet colleagues attending the event. Operation Sindoor, caste enumeration, the first anniversary of the Modi government in its third term and good governance issues were discussed. Modi asserted that caste enumeration is a step towards bringing into the mainstream of development those left behind, as he emphasised that his government does not believe in caste politics but in the empowerment of the marginalised. Modi also asked leaders to avoid the tendency to speak out of turn, seen as disapproval in the backdrop of several political rows. —*PTI*

Cong: Fire Jangra for saying 'tourists should have fought'

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

The Congress on Sunday objected strongly to BJP MP Ram Chander Jangra's remarks that tourists should have put up a fight against terrorists in Pahalgam, demanding his sacking and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's apology in the matter.

Modi and the BJP leadership's silence should be seen as a "tacit approval" of Jangra's statement, the Congress said. Party President Mallikarjun Kharge claimed BJP leaders were competing with each other to malign the Pahalgam victims and the armed forces.

Jangra's comments are being seen by the Congress as the latest in a series of deplorable remarks made recently by BJP leaders – Madhya Pradesh minister Vijay Shah and the state's deputy chief minister Jagdish Devda.

Chiding the BJP on X, Kharge said, "BJP Rajya Sabha MP Ram Chander Jangra's shameful statement has once again exposed the petty mentality of RSS-BJP." —*PTI*

From Russia to Japan, delegation conveys resolve against terror

KOLKATA/DOHA/SEOUL/ MANAMA/MOSCOW 25 MAY

Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee, who is representing the TMC in the all-party delegations post-Operation Sindoor, said the team's outreach in Japan was meaningful as it conveyed the message of India's courage and clarity in the fight against terror.

Seven multi-party delegations will travel to 33 global capitals to reach out to the international community.

"Our global outreach in Japan concluded with a meaningful engagement at the Indian Embassy," Banerjee said in a post on X on Saturday night.

The all-party parliamentary delegation led by Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Kumar Jha – of which Banerjee is a member - arrived in Seoul on Saturday.

The Indian Embassy said the delegation attended a briefing by Ambassador Amit Kumar, who "highlighted the Korean-specific approach to the scheduled engagements, setting the context for a strong messaging of India's stance of zero tolerance against terrorism."

Similarly, a delegation on Sunday briefed Bahrain's Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa about the challenge of cross-border terrorism.

All-party delegation led by JD(U) MP Sanjay Jha reaches South Korea after Japan visit PHOTO: ANI

- The seven multi-party delegations bound for 33 global capitals, met with leaders in Japan, South Korea, Bahrain, Russia, Slovenia and Qatar on Saturday and Sunday to highlight India's fight against terrorism

The delegation, led by BJP MP Baijayant Jay Panda, who wrote on X, "India and Bahrain share a deep, historic friendship built on trust, shared values & mutual respect. ... Together in the fight against terrorism."

Meanwhile delegation led by DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi was in Russia and Slovenia. "India and Russia share a time-tested relationship based on mutual trust and cooperation underpinned by their Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership," the Embassy of India in Moscow said in a statement on Saturday.

Meanwhile, a delegation led by NCP-SP leader Supriya Sule arrived in Qatar late Saturday. —*PTI*

India, Pak's NSAs likely to visit Moscow

Moscow, 25 May

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval is expected in Moscow on 27-29 May to attend a security meeting organised by Russia's Security Council. Doval is invited for the 13th international meeting of high representatives for security issues under the chairmanship of the Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Sergei Shoigu.

Pakistan is also a member of the SCO -all of who were invited– and its NSA Lt Gen Asim Malik is expected to attend.

—*PTI*

Lalu expels son Tej from RJD after post on 'love'

PATNA, 25 MAY

Lalu Prasad, president of the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), has expelled his elder son Tej Pratap Yadav from the party, declaring that he will "have nothing to do" with his family. The decision follows Tej Pratap's controversial social media post where he claimed to be in a relationship for twelve years, despite being married with a pending divorce.

He later deleted the post, asserting that his Facebook account had been hacked.

In a social media announcement, Prasad condemned his son's behaviour as "irresponsible" and detrimental to their collective pursuit of social justice. He stated that Tej Pratap would have no further role in the party or the family, imposing a six-year expulsion.

His oldest son's "disregard for moral values in personal life weakens our collective struggle to achieve social justice," Prasad said.

This development occurs just months before the Bihar assembly elections, where the RJD will be led by Tej Pratap's younger brother, Tejashwi Yadav. When questioned about recent events, Tejashwi remarked that "certain things we cannot tolerate," implying ongoing family discord.

Tej Pratap, a two-term MLA, has previously attracted negative attention for his antics, including threatening a policeman.

Tej Pratap Yadav PHOTO: ANI

JD(U) spokesperson Neeraj Kumar said, "Lalu Prasad must remember that he will still be charged with dynasty rule and keeping mum when his daughter-in-law, a grandchild of a former CM, was humiliated," in an allusion to Aishwarya, the granddaughter of Daroga Prasad Rai, who tied the knot with Tej Pratap in 2018 but left his house a few months later, alleging that she was driven out. —*PTI*

'No smoke without fire', says EPS on TASMAC raids

COIMBATORE, 25 MAY

Days after the Supreme Court slammed the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with its probe into an alleged scam in the state-run liquor corporation TASMAC, AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami on Sunday said only a probe would establish facts and asserted that there is "no smoke without fire."

Palaniswami referred to related proceedings in the Madras High Court and later in the apex court.

He said: "There is no smoke without fire," adding everyone is aware of the Rs 10 extra charge per quarter bottle in TASMAC outlets.

Palaniswami questioned Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin boycotting the NITI Aayog for the past 3 years, saying that had he taken part in such meetings, the required funds could have been secured for the state and permissions obtained for projects.

He alleged Stalin took part in the NITI Aayog governing council meeting on 24 May in view of ED's searching TASMAC's premises.

Edappadi K Palaniswami PHOTO: PTI

- AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami questioned why Stalin attended the NITI Aayog meeting after having boycotted it for the past three years

Stalin said his participation was only to secure the state's financial rights. He demanded 50 per cent share for states in central taxes. . —*PTI*

'WILL STRENGTHEN JUSTICE'

Caste census not divisive: SC panel head

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Nixing those that claimed caste enumeration would create chasms in society, National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) Chairperson Kishor Makwana said the data would serve as a foundation for policy and strengthen social justice.

It will help uplift the marginalised backward communities, he told PTI in an interview.

Makwana welcomed the BJP-led NDA government's decision to include caste enumeration in the next census, saying that unlike in 2011, "definite figures would be available" that would ensure proportionate access to welfare schemes.

The UPA government conducted the Socio-Economic and Caste Census in 2011, which was the first attempt since 1931 to collect caste data nationwide. However, the caste data from SECC-2011 was never fully released or utilised.

Kishor Makwana PHOTO: FB

Rejecting concerns that the caste census could lead to sectarian divisions, Makwana said, "This will not create any division based on caste. Rather, it will strengthen social justice. It will uplift backward castes and strengthen all three aspects – social, political, and economic – of Babasaheb Ambedkar's dream for the Scheduled Caste community."

- NCSC Chairperson Kishor Makwana said the proposed caste enumeration would ensure that those who have remained deprived, finally get their dues, highlighting how proper data would allow policy decisions to be made proportionally and not with guess work, as has been the case

The caste census will provide accurate numbers that will serve as a foundation for policy decisions and target beneficiaries of schemes such as the Mudra Yojana in a much better manner, he said. "It will ensure that those who have remained deprived, finally get their due."

Noting that the last caste census was held in 1931 and updated data has been lacking, Makwana said, "We've been working on the assumption that SCs form 7 per cent of the population. But without verified data, many deprived sections remain unaccounted for."

"The new census will bring detailed data, not just for the SCs, but also for sub-castes within Muslim and Christian communities," he said.

"With definite population data, communities will get what they deserve in proportion. Right now, benefits are being given based on estimates. Once we have numbers, proper policy interventions can be made."

Makwana also criticised political parties that previously opposed the caste census, saying they didn't include caste data in the seven censuses conducted since 1951 because their intentions were not right.

—*PTI*

Tripura's rare Bostami turtles face extinction

AGARTALA, 25 MAY

The endangered softshell Bostami turtles, found around the Kalyan Sagar Lake near Tripura's revered Tripureswari Temple, are on the brink of extinction The turtles, classified as extinct in the wild by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, historically thrived in this natural habitat. The state government has approved a year-long study by the Turtle Survival Alliance Foundation to understand the current population and conservation challenges. The study aims to gather crucial data that has long been lacking. Recent construction work along the lake's banks has disrupted the turtles' laying and basking habits, exacerbating their decline. Efforts to relocate the turtles are complicated by local religious beliefs, adding urgency to the need for conservation strategies.*—PTI*

Gangraped MP woman dies; two arrested

KHANDWA, 25 MAY

A 45-year-old tribal woman has died from severe injuries after being raped by two men in Khandwa district, according to police reports. The incident took place on Saturday at the Roshni police outpost in Khalwa tehsil, located approximately 90 km from the district headquarters. Khandwa's Additional Superintendent of Police, Rajesh Raghuvanshi, stated that the preliminary investigation suggests the woman was brutally assaulted, leading to significant blood loss. A post-mortem examination is being conducted at Khandwa district hospital. The woman, a member of the Kurku tribal community, was returning from a wedding on Saturday morning with her family when the tragic event occurred.*—PTI*

Wildlife activists killed in accident in Rajasthan

JAIPUR, 25 MAY

Three wildlife activists, including prominent conservationist Radheshyam Pemani Bishnoi and a forest guard died in a road accident in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer. Radheshyam, 28, was an animal rescuer from Dholia village in Pokhran, known for his efforts to save the Great Indian Bustard, considered India's most critically-endangered bird species. Radheshyam, conservationists Shyam Bishnoi and Kanwar Raj Bhati, and Surendra Chaudhary, a forest guard, were killed when their camper vehicle collided with a truck in the Lathi area of Jaisalmer on 23 May. *—PTI*

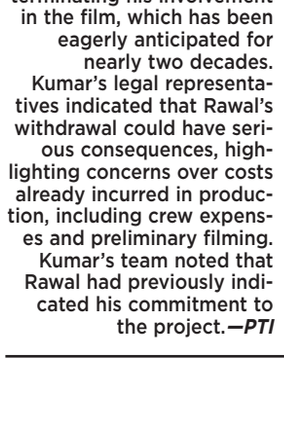


PHOTO: ANI

Paresh Rawal to clarify ending film contract

MUMBAI, 25 MAY

Veteran Bollywood actor Paresh Rawal has confirmed that he has responded to a lawsuit filed by his 'Hera Pheri' co-star Akshay Kumar, who is demanding Rs 25 crore in damages following Rawal's unexpected exit from the franchise's third instalment. Rawal, beloved for his portrayal of Baburao Ganpatrao Apte, expressed his confidence that his lawyer's response will clarify his reasons for terminating his involvement in the film, which has been eagerly anticipated for nearly two decades. Kumar's legal representatives indicated that Rawal's withdrawal could have serious consequences, highlighting concerns over costs already incurred in production, including crew expenses and preliminary filming. Kumar's team noted that Rawal had previously indicated his commitment to the project.*—PTI*

A car moves on the waterlogged service road along the Delhi–Gurugram Expressway after heavy rainfall in Gurugram. Vehicles stuck in debris following flash floods triggered by heavy rains at Jagatkhana in Kullu district, Himachal Pradesh. Vehicles partially submerged following rains at an underpass in Cantt area of in New Delhi *PHOTO: ANI*

Heavy rains, strong winds batter Kerala

Heavy downpour choke peoples life as high tidal waves, rough seas hit coastal areas

T'PURAM, 25 MAY

Trees got uprooted, houses were damaged, rivers are in spate and shutters of some dams were raised in Kerala on Sunday with heavy rains overnight and strong winds continuing to lash across the state.

Rains lashed all districts throughout the night and in the morning, causing intense waterlogging in low-lying areas and traffic snarls.

Water flow in the Punnapuzha River, crisscrossing through the Chooralmala-Mundakkai region in Wayanad, heavily increased due to continuing downpour.

In Pathanamthitta district, a family narrowly escaped as huge trees uprooted and fell upon their tile-roof house near Ezhamkulam.

Five shutters of the Malankara dam in Idukki district were raised on Sunday morning to release the excess water. Those living on the banks of the Thodupuzha and Moovattupuzha rivers should exercise caution.

Strong winds uprooted trees in northern Kozhikode, Kasaragod and Ernakulam districts.

The Indian Meteorological Department predicted thunderstorms with moderate rainfall with surface wind speed of 50 kmph at a few places in Ernakulam, Thrissur, Malappuram and Kozhikode.

Moderate rainfall with surface wind speed of 40 kmph will occur at a few places in Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta, Kottayam, Palakkad, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragode.

The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) warned of high tidal waves from 3.1 metres to 4.2 metres and rough seas in Kerala's coastal area till 26 May.

An early monsoon arrived in Kerala on 24 May after 16 years. *—PTI*

In Pathanamthitta district, a family narrowly escaped as huge trees uprooted and fell upon their tile-roof house near Ezhamkulam *PHOTO: ANI*

The sudden change in weather led to temperatures dropping to a minimum of 19.8 degrees Celsius in the Delhi *PHOTO: ANI*

Deluge disrupts flights, triggers clogs in Delhi

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Thunderstorm accompanied by heavy rain battered Delhi overnight, disrupting flight operations, uprooting trees and electricity poles and causing waterlogging in several areas, while bringing relief from stifling heat.

The sudden change in weather led to temperatures dropping to a minimum of 19.8 degrees Celsius in the city.

Winds gusting up to 82 kmph and 81.2 mm of rain were recorded in six hours.

49 flights, including 17 international ones, were diverted, while 180 flights were delayed and some cancelled at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here due to the inclement weather.

Several areas in the city were partially submerged.

A car and a bus were seen almost completely submerged at an inundated underpass in the Delhi Cantonment area. Videos circulating on social media showed similar scenes, purportedly from the Minto Road area.

The weather department had issued a red alert on Saturday night warning about an approaching thunderstorm cell from the west and northwest. Severe thunderstorms accompanied by frequent lightning and gusty winds were predicted. Power was disrupted in many parts of Delhi as lines and poles were damaged with uprooted trees and broken branches falling on them. *—PTI*

DUST STORM HITS LIFE IN RAJASTHAN; 2 KILLED

JAIPUR, 25 MAY

Dust storms and rain affected normal life in parts of Rajasthan with a woman and her daughter killed in the Khairthal-Tijara district as a wall of their house collapsed. Sumaya, 21, and her one-year-old daughter were buried alive after a wall of their house collapsed, police said, adding that her injure husband has been hospitalised. Electricity supply was disrupted in parts of Bikaner, Sikar and Jhunjhunu. *—PTI*

Dust storms and rain affected normal life in parts of Rajasthan *PHOTO: ANI*

COP DEAD IN POLICE STATION ROOF COLLAPSE

GHAZIABAD, 25 MAY

A 58-year-old sub-inspector died early Sunday when the roof of the Assistant Police Commissioner (ACP) Ankur Vihar Loni's office collapsed in rain, an officer said. Virendra Kumar Mishra was sleeping inside a room and was found buried under the debris. Additional Police Commissioner Alok Priyadarshi confirmed the incident. The collapse wasn't discovered till policemen came to the office in the morning. *—PTI*

Screengrab of video showing police office collapse in Ghaziabad *PHOTO: PTI*

laying cards without gambling not wicked: SC

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Playing cards for entertainment and recreation without an element of betting and gambling does not involve moral turpitude, the Supreme Court has said as it restored the election of a man in a cooperative society in Karnataka.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh noted that one Hanumantharayappa YC, who was elected to the board of directors of Government Porcelain Factory Employees Housing Co-operative Society Ltd, was allegedly fined Rs 200 without any trial when he along with others were caught playing cards.

"... we find it difficult that the misconduct attributed to the appellant involves moral turpitude....Every action against which one can raise an eyebrow may not necessarily involve moral turpitude," the bench said.

Noting that Hanumantharayappa was not a habitual gambler, the bench said that playing cards as a mode of entertainment and recreation did not amount to moral turpitude.

The top court said that Hanumantharayappa was elected to the Board of Directors of the cooperative society with the highest votes and the consequential punishment is highly disproportionate to the misconduct committed by him. *—PTI*

A total of 24 crew members of the Liberian vessel that developed a critical 26-degree list nearly 38 nautical miles southwest of Kochi on Saturday were rescued by the Indian Navy in Kochi *PHOTO: PTI*

LIBERIAN VESSEL SINKS OFF KERALA COAST; OIL SPILLS

KOCHI, 25 MAY

A Liberian vessel carrying 640 containers, including 13 with hazardous cargo, sank off the Kochi coast on Sunday, sparking fears of a possible oil spill. All 24 crew members were rescued after the ship developed a critical tilt on Saturday, according to officials.

So far, no oil spill has been reported, the Ministry of Defence said on Sunday as full pollution response preparedness was activated by the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) which was monitoring the situation along with the Indian Navy.

"Liberian container vessel MSC ELSA 3 (IMO No 9123221) sank off the Kochi coast at around 0750 hrs today on May 25, 2025, due to flooding...The vessel went down with 640 containers, including 13 with hazardous cargo and 12 containing calcium carbide. It was also loaded with 84.44 MT of diesel and 367.1 MT of furnace oil," the ministry said in a statement.

Of the 24 crew members, 21 had been rescued by the Indian Coast Guard on Saturday, and the remaining three were later rescued by INS Sujata, which joined the rescue operation launched by the ICG.

the ICG has activated "full pollution response preparedness" and ICG aircraft equipped with advanced oil spill detection systems are conducting aerial surveillance, officials said. *—PTI*

Kerala murder suspect attempts suicide in custody

T'PURAM, 25 MAY

Afan, the sole suspect in the recent mass murders in Venjaramoodu, attempted suicide at the central prison on Sunday, according to police reports. He has since been transported to the Government Medical College Hospital for treatment.

The 23-year-old's suicide attempt came just two days after the Pangodu police submitted a charge sheet in one of the murder cases to a local court. A prison official at Poojappura Central Prison disclosed that Afan tried to hang himself using a cloth while in the toilet at approximately 11.00am. Fortunately, jail staff on duty intervened in time and rushed him to the hospital. Updates regarding his condition are still pending.

Afan is charged with the murder of five persons, including his grandmother. *—PTI*

DAMAGE NOT ACCESSED

Early rains bring tears for onion farmers

MUMBAI, 25 MAY

Pre-monsoon rains in several parts of Maharashtra have increased the worries of the state's onion cultivators, who are already stressed about falling prices of the kitchen staple.

Onion crops on thousands of acres have been damaged in the rains, leaving farmers staring at heavy losses, Maharashtra State Onion Producers Farmers Association founder-president Bharat Dighole said.

The damage in real terms is yet to be ascertained.

Onion-producing areas in Konkan, Nashik, Pune, Kolhapur, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Latur, Amravati and Nagpur witnessed heavy unseasonal rains since 6 May.

In the Lasalgaon market, as of May 20, the average price was Rs 1,150 per quintal.

Onion growers begin preparations for the Rabi season a year in advance, with the nursery being set up in August-September 2024 and replantation carried out from November (2024) to January (2025).

The harvested crops of these farmers have become wet, while even standing crops have been damaged in many areas.

While in 2023-24, it was on 4,64,884 hectares, in 2024-25 it was 6,51,965 hectares.

Dighole said Nashik is the largest onion-producing region in the country, and in 2024-25, the crop was cultivated on 2,90,136 hectares, while it was on 1,67,285 hectares in 2023-24 and 2,48,417 hectares in 2022-23.

Despite bans being imposed by the Union government now and then since 2019, exports have been robust and brought in substantial revenue, with Maharashtra being the leading state in the country in this regard.

In 2022-23 25.25 lakh tonnes of onions were produced and farmers earned Rs 4,522 crore. The figure was 17.17 lakh tonnes and Rs 3,922 crore for 2023-24. The Union government has to make public the yearly output needed in the country so that farmers can plan accordingly and excess produce can be exported.*—PTI*

Dalit family assaulted in UP over cattle trespass

BHADOHI, 25 MAY

A Dalit couple has been brutally assaulted in Anaich village over objections to cattle grazing in their fields.

Six individuals have been charged following the incident.

Deepak Kumar Pasi, a landless farmer had confronted Rajaram Yadav regarding his cattle trespassing on his sharecropped land.

Enraged, Yadav and five accomplices attacked Deepak with sticks and iron rods, subjecting him and his wife, Sumitra to both physical harm and casteist slurs.

The assailants also tried to disrobe Sumitra and assaulted Pasi's mother and brother.

While the couple was admitted to hospital, their brother and brother were discharged after treatment.

PHOTO: ANI

The police filed charges against the accused.

Meanwhile, police registered a case against unidentified individuals on Sunday, a day after four people were severely thrashed by a mob in Aligarh on suspicion of transporting prohibited cattle meat.

The attackers linked to a right-wing group intercepted a vehicle on 23 May, setting it ablaze and attempted to lynch its four occupants. The police rescued the victims. *—PTI*

MUD SPA TIME

Amid the intense summer heat, sloth bear cubs play in mud to get relief, at Nahargarh Biological Park, in Jaipur, on Sunday
PHOTO: PTI

Rajasthan women reroute bandits to farming

Weary of fear and despair, the women resolved to reclaim their lives and convinced their husbands to come out of the jungle and give up arms
PHOTO: PTI

Until about 15 years ago, Sampatti Devi and many women like her in Rajasthan's Karauli district lived in constant fear, dreading the day their husbands might not return home.

Repeated droughts, driven in part by declining rainfall linked to climate change, had turned their land barren. Water sources dried up, crippling agriculture and animal husbandry, the lifeblood of their livelihood.

With no other way to survive, many men were forced into dacoity, hiding in jungles and risking their lives every day to evade the police. Karauli's average annual rainfall dropped from 722.1 mm (1951-2000) to 563.94 mm (2001-2011), according to government data.

But in the 2010s, something remarkable happened. The women, weary of fear and despair, resolved to reclaim their lives. They convinced their husbands to come out of the jungle and give up arms.

Together, they began reviving old, dried-up ponds and constructing new pokhars (water bodies) with the help of Tarun Bharat Sangh (TBS), an Alwar-based NGO dedicated to water conservation since 1975.

"I would have been dead by now. She convinced me to come back and start farming again," recalls Jagdish, Sampatti Devi's husband, now 58, who surrendered his weapons and chose peace.

Pooling every penny earned over the years by selling milk, they built a pokhar at the base of a hill near their village, Alampur, in 2015–16.

When the rains came, the pokhar filled and for the first time in years, their family had water, enough to sustain them for a longer period.

"Now, we grow mustard, wheat, pearl millet and vegetables," says Sampatti Devi, sitting proudly on the pokhar's embankment. She even rents it out for water chestnut cultivation, earning about Rs 1 lakh each season.

Over the years, 16 such pokhars have been built in the surrounding forest, each capturing runoff from the slopes. Diesel pumps now lift water to irrigate fields.

Karauli, once among Rajasthan's worst-hit dacoit areas, witnessed a transformation.

Community-led water conservation revived groundwater sparked hope and renewed farming opportunities.

Sumit Dookia, an associate professor at Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University and a Rajasthan native, says the Chambal region's rocky terrain hastens rainwater runoff, limiting groundwater recharge.

He says that similar transformations have also occurred in Uttar Pradesh's Etawah, where former dacoits returned to farming.

In Karauli, this wave of conservation has transformed the Serni, once a seasonal river, into a perennial one. Just a decade ago, the river would run dry after Diwali, leaving people desperate for water.

Forty years ago, he says, the river flowed all year round, but overuse and climate change had drained it dry. With no options left, some men migrated to cities in search of work, while others turned to mining or dacoity.

A 2013 study by the National Institute of Miners' Health (now part of ICMR-NIOH) found that 74 per cent of surveyed sandstone workers in Karauli suffered from silicosis.

Water scarcity even disrupted marriage decisions. Families of prospective brides avoided sending daughters to this parched land, while poverty forced many Karauli parents to marry off their daughters early.

In Bhoorkheda village, where many families were forced to marry off their daughters early under the weight of financial hardship, 55-year-old Prem, the wife of a former dacoit, gave up four bighas of her own land to build a pokhar on the village's edge.

Lajja Ram, 60, also from Bhoorkheda, admits he turned to dacoity out of desperation.

It was his sister who finally persuaded him to surrender and join water conservation efforts.

In Arora village, 70-year-old folk singer Siyaram remembers when rains failed, crops withered and children wept from hunger.

His 30 bighas of land lay parched and his sons migrated to cities. His wife, Prem Devi, who passed away two years ago, had inspired him to join water conservation.

Today, Siyaram sings another tune of hope.

On a scorching May afternoon, Karauli's ponds and pokhars shimmer with water. The Serni river flows gently, with children splashing and cattle grazing along its banks.

"A decade ago, no one would have imagined this. Our women made this possible!" says Ranveer. *—PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

The more you sit, the greater the health risk

For patients hospitalised with chest pain, the amount of time they spend sedentary afterward is linked to a greater risk for more heart problems and death within a year.

That's the key finding of a new peer-reviewed study my colleagues and I published in the journal Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes.

We asked 609 emergency room patients experiencing chest pain — average age of 62 — to wear a physical activity monitor for 30 days after leaving the hospital.

The monitor measured movements, sitting time and sleep throughout the day. We then followed patients for one year to track whether they had additional heart problems or died.

We found that patients who averaged more than 15 hours of sedentary behaviour daily — which does not include sleep — were more than twice as likely to experience more heart problems or die in the year after discharge than patients who accrued a daily average of 12 hours of sedentary time.

But our goal wasn't just to document that sitting is harmful. It was also to figure out what patients should do instead to lower their risk.

We found that replacing 30 minutes of sedentary time with moderate or vigorous movement, like brisk walking or running, was most beneficial. It was associated with a 62 per cent lower risk of experiencing more heart problems or dying in the year after discharge.

But we also found that replacing 30 minutes of sedentary time with just light movement, such as slow walking or housework, lowered the risk of heart problems and death by 50 per cent.

Sleep was also a healthier option. Replacing 30 minutes of sedentary time with sleep lowered the risk of heart problems and death by 14 per cent.

Over 8 million people in the US are admitted to the hospital with chest pain suggestive of acute coronary syndrome. annually. This covers a range of conditions involving reduced blood flow to the heart, including angina and heart attack.

Patients with acute coronary syndrome remain at high risk of having another heart problem even with optimal medical treatment.

The risk also remains high for patients with chest pain who are discharged without a diagnosis of acute coronary syndrome, as their unexplained chest pain may be a precursor to more serious heart problems. Given this risk, there is a need to identify risk factors that can be modified to improve a patient's prognosis after hospitalisation for chest pain. In previous research, we found that patients with acute coronary syndrome had a fear of exercise and were sedentary, spending over 13 hours a day sitting.

Given that sedentary behaviour has been linked to poor heart health in the general population, we were concerned that patients were unknowingly increasing their risk of having another heart problem.

Our latest findings confirm that sedentary time is a harmful behaviour for these patients. But beyond telling patients to stop sitting so much, our work provides important guidance: Any movement, regardless of how intense, can be beneficial after hospitalisation. This is especially relevant for people recovering from heart problems who may find exercise difficult or scary.

While exercise provides the best "bang for your buck" in terms of health benefits, our findings are good news for patients who may not have the time, ability or desire to exercise. And for those unable to fit in more movement, just getting an extra half hour of sleep is a small, doable step that can make a meaningful difference for your health after hospitalisation.

Researchers don't fully understand why sedentary time is harmful. Muscles help regulate blood sugar and lipid levels. It is thought that when muscles aren't used, such as when patients sit for hours, this can lead to harmful elevations in blood sugar and lipids.

In turn, this can cause inflammation, plaque build-up in the arteries and organ damage. More research is needed to understand the biological mechanisms so that we can determine just how much movement is needed in a day.

While our study highlights the potential risks of sedentary behavior after being hospitalised for chest pain, it was an observational study. Clinical trials are needed to confirm that replacing sedentary time with activity or sleep can improve prognosis. *—PTI*

Patients with acute coronary syndrome remain at high risk of having another heart problem even with optimal medical treatment
PHOTO: FREEPIK

Is it the end of the road for Mohammed Shami?

Mohammed Shami
PHOTO: X

Mohammed Shami's possible omission from the Indian Test squad for the England tour was doing the rounds for past one week but the eternal optimist would have loved to believe that those artistic wrists would be at work in the Old Blighty.

However, the chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar on Saturday decided to play the harbinger of doom while announcing the 18-member team, which didn't feature the name of the Bengal speedster.

He is not yet fit for taking up Test match workload and missing out on 10 games in Australia and now England has raised questions over his future in the format. Can the "Amroha Express" add to his 229 wickets from 64 Test appearances?

At the moment, it seems like the Indian cricket establishment is ready to move on from one of the country's greatest seam and swing exponents.

In fact, BCCI's Sports Science and Medical team representative was in Lucknow earlier this week and the expert has reported that Shami's body is far from ready to take the rigours of bowling 15 to 20 overs a day and staying in the field for 90 overs.

With three of the five specialist pacers in the line-up having played less than 10 Tests, the selectors would have wanted to take Shami for the series, as experience isn't always found in the supermarket.

It comes with years of honing the craft and Shami is a master whether it is the SG Test ball, Dukes or Kookaburra. When it comes to reverse swing, there are no peers of Indian team's favourite "Lala".

While Shami played the Champions Trophy in February-March and also the bulk of the games for Sunrisers Hyderabad this IPL, he has been far from his best since his return to competitive cricket during the domestic season last year.

The only first-class match that he played was the one against Madhya Pradesh on his return from ankle surgery and he bowled more than 40 overs in that Ranji Trophy game. However, many saw him taking frequent breaks between overs to get some rest.

It was also learnt that Shami didn't pay heed to the team management's requests to join them in Australia as his body wasn't ready for red-ball cricket. He wanted to slowly build upon workload in white-ball games, but strangely, even after six months, his body isn't ready for Test matches.

Obviously there weren't any day games to check how his body held up to the pressures of the longest format.

Shami is playing white-ball cricket but during this IPL, he has looked far from his menacing self while playing for Sunrisers Hyderabad, getting just six wickets from nine games before being dropped from the playing XI.

His official age is 34 years 263 days, but if one listens to the murmurs in the Bengal cricketing ecosystem, the UP-born pacer is believed to be close to 40 years old. The recovery for a 40-year-old pacer is doubly tough after a hard day's play.

Also the Centre of Excellence has had a chequered record in terms of clearing cricketers, who have broken down in the middle of a series, and the magnitude of the upcoming five Tests didn't allow the selectors to take a risk that could leave them red-faced.

Already there are enough questions as to how Mayank Yadav was declared fit as the bowler once again broke down after playing just two matches in the IPL.

While experienced, game-changing fast bowlers are a rarity, non-selection for the England tour kind of makes the writing on the wall clear as far as Shami is concerned. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

20 killed, 150 injured in heavy storms in Pak

LAHORE, 25 MAY

Pakistan's Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) said that 20 people were killed and 150 injured in separate storm-related incidents across the Punjab province, Geo News reported. Mostly, the deaths were caused by the collapse of dilapidated buildings and unsafe structures, the PDMA said in an initial report. It said three deaths occurred in Jhelum, while Rawalpindi, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Sialkot and Mianwali each saw one fatality, as per Geo News. Several incidents of fallen trees and damage to solar panels were also reported in Lahore. Meanwhile, rescue officials said at least 10 people were killed and 51 injured in Lahore. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz directed the administration and rescue teams to stay alert, citing heavy rains and storms across the province. *—ANI*

Baloch scribe killed in Pak crackdown

BALOCHISTAN, 25 MAY

In an escalation of violence against journalists in Balochistan, journalist Abdul Latif was assassinated on Saturday morning at his home in Mashkay, district Awaran, sources said. The Baloch Yakjehti Committee (BYC) said Latif was shot dead at approximately 3am by Pakistani state-backed militias in front of his wife and children. Latif was widely respected for his fearless reporting on human rights violations and resistance in the war-torn province. His work gave voice to the oppressed and documented the suffering of Baloch communities under Pakistani military operations. This killing is part of what Baloch activists describe as Pakistan's "kill and dump" policy. The BYC said Latif's son Saif, along with seven other family members, were found dead a few months ago. *—ANI*

Man dies in boat explosion on Hudson River

NEW YORK, 24 MAY

One man died on Saturday morning in an explosion on a boat docked on the Hudson River in New York, authorities said. The man was doing work involving a flame or sparks when the blast happened about 10.30am, the US Coast Guard said on social media. First responders answering a 911 call found a 59-year-old man in the river, and he was declared dead at the scene, New York police said. Authorities are still investigating the cause of the explosion, police said. The man's name was not released. *—PTI*

US crypto investor charged with kidnapping

NEW YORK, 25 MAY

A cryptocurrency investor has been arrested and charged with kidnapping a man and keeping him locked up for weeks in an upscale Manhattan apartment, where authorities say he was beaten, shocked and led to believe that his family was in danger if he didn't give up his Bitcoin password. John Woeltz, 37, was arrested Friday night after the victim escaped from the eight-bedroom town house and flagged down a traffic officer on the street for help, according to prosecutors. Woeltz was arraigned Saturday on charges of kidnapping, assault, unlawful imprisonment and criminal possession of a firearm, court records show. He was ordered held without bail, a spokesperson for the Manhattan district attorney's office confirmed Saturday. *—PTI*

Russia, Ukraine swap 307 prisoners on each side

Move comes after Russian drone attacks kill 12 in Ukraine

KYIV, 25 MAY

Russia and Ukraine swapped hundreds more prisoners on Sunday, the Russian defence ministry said, the third part of a major swap that was a moment of cooperation in otherwise failed efforts to reach a ceasefire.

The ministry said each side brought home 303 more soldiers, after each released a total of 307 combatants and civilians on Saturday, and 390 on Friday. The swap was the largest in the war so far.

The announcement came hours after a massive Russian drone-and-missile attack targeted the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, and other regions in the country for a second consecutive night, killing at least 12 people and injuring dozens, officials said early Sunday.

At least four people were killed and 16 were injured in the capital itself, according to Ukraine's security service. In the region of Zhytomyr, west of Kyiv, three children were killed, aged 8, 12 and 17, according to the emergency service.

The scale of the onslaught was stunning — Russia hit Ukraine with 367 drones and missiles, making this the largest single attack of the more than three-years-long war, according to Yuriy Ihnat, a Ukraine Air Force spokesperson.

In all, Russia used 69 missiles of various types and 298 drones, including Iranian-designed Shahed drones, Ihnat said. It was "the most massive strike in terms of the number of air attack weapons on the territory of Ukraine".

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that Russian missiles and drones struck more than 30 cities and villages across Ukraine and urged Western partners to ramp up sanctions on Russia.

Zelenskyy wrote on X that the targets included Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Khmelnytskyi, Ternopil, Chernihiv, Sumy, Odesa, Poltava, Dnipro, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv and Cherkasy regions.

"These were deliberate strikes on ordinary cities. Ordinary residential buildings were destroyed and damaged," he said.

Meanwhile, Russia's Defense Ministry said it shot down 110 Ukrainian drones overnight. *—PTI*

The Houthis fired a Long-Range Missile towards Eilat, which was intercepted at 1700km, following a previous Drone downed *PHOTO: AL JAZEERA*

Israel says it shot down Houthi missile

JERUSALEM/ DEIR AL-BALAH 25 MAY

The Israeli military said it intercepted a missile fired by Yemen's Houthi rebels on Sunday.

The missile triggered air raid sirens in Jerusalem and other areas. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage.

The Iran-backed Houthis have launched repeated missile attacks targeting Israel as well as international shipping in the Red Sea, portraying it as a response to Israel's offensive against Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Most of the targeted ships had no relation to Israel or the conflict.

Meanwhile, Israeli strikes overnight and into Sunday killed at least 14 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, including a mother and her two children who were inside a tent that was struck, local health officials said.Israel. *—PTI*

N Korea detains 3 for warship failure

SEOUL, 25 MAY

- The government says the warship suffered major damage, saying the hull on the starboard side was scratched and some seawater flowed into the stern section

North Korean authorities have detained three shipyard officials over the recent failed launch of a naval destroyer, an incident that leader Kim Jong Un said was caused by criminal negligence, state media said Sunday.

Law enforcement authorities detained the chief engineer, head of the hull construction workshop and deputy manager for administrative affairs at Chongjin Shipyard, who they said were responsible for Wednesday's failed launch, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

Hong Kil Ho, the shipyard manager, was summoned for questioning, KCNA previously reported. The 5,000-tonne-class destroyer was damaged Wednesday when a transport cradle on the ship's stern detached early during a launch ceremony attended by Kim at the northeastern port of Chongjin. Satellite imagery on the site showed the vessel lying on its side and draped in blue covers, with parts of the ship submerged.

The vessel is North Korea's second known destroyer. The failed launch was subsequently an embarrassment to Kim, who is eager to build greater naval forces to deal with what he calls US-led military threats.

North Korea however denied the warship suffered major damage, saying the hull on the starboard side was scratched and some seawater flowed into the stern section.

North Korea launched its first destroyer, also a 5,000-tonne-class ship, with massive fanfare last month. The ship is North Korea's largest and most advanced warship and state media reported it is designed to carry various weapons including nuclear missiles. *—PTI*

North Korea's brand new destroyer didn't survive its own launch ceremony *PHOTO: X@NAFOVOYAGER*

Indonesia, China discuss trade expansion

JAKARTA, 25 MAY

Chinese Premier Li Qiang met with Indonesia's President Prabowo Subianto on Sunday to discuss ways to expand trade and investment during the US global trade war and as ec'monomic globalization faces headwinds.

Li arrived in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, on Saturday afternoon for a three-day visit to Southeast Asia's largest economy. It was the first stop of his first overseas visit this year.

Indonesia and China are member states of the Group of 20 (G-20) countries and BRICS union (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates).

Li brought 60 prominent Chinese businesspeople for his address to the Indonesia-China Business Reception on Saturday evening. He emphasised that China's economy achieved rapid growth this year despite increasing external challenges.

"The current international situation is a stalemate," Li said at the event. "Unilateralism and protectionism are on the rise, bullying behaviour is increasing." *—PTI*

Foreign Ministers line up for a photo call at the start of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Foreign Ministers' Meeting opening ceremony at Kuala Lumpur on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

'ASEAN must stay united on US tariffs'

KUALA LUMPUR, 25 MAY

- TASEAN countries are reeling from tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump's administration ranging from 10 per cent to 49 per cent

Southeast Asian nations must accelerate regional economic integration, diversify their markets and stay united to tackle the fallout from global trade disruptions resulting from sweeping US tariff hikes, Malaysian Foreign Minister Mohamad Hasan said Sunday.

Mohamad, opening a meeting of foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, also reiterated the bloc's call to warring parties in Myanmar to cease hostilities in a deadly civil war that has killed thousands and displaced millions of people since a 2021 government takeover by the military.

"ASEAN nations are among those most heavily affected by the US-imposed tariffs.

The US–China trade war is dramatically disrupting production and trade patterns worldwide. A global economic slowdown is likely to happen," Mohamad said. "We must seize this moment to deepen regional economic integration, so that we can better shield our region from external shocks."

ASEAN countries are reeling from tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump's administration ranging from 10 per cent to 49 per cent.

Six of the association's 10 member nations were among the worst-hit with tarrifs ranging from 32 per cent to 49 per cent. This would likely affect ASEAN's targeted growth forecast of 4.7 per cent this year, trade officials said. *—PTI*

GST driving up Pakistan's poverty: World Bank

ISLAMABAD, 25 MAY

The General Sales Tax has the largest marginal contribution to the rise of poverty while a monthly cash transfer programme to the poorest families has the largest positive impact on inequality reduction in Pakistan, a World Bank study has said.

'The Effects of Taxes and Transfers on Inequality and Poverty in Pakistan' reports that the General Sales Tax (GST) payments account for over 7 per cent households' pre-tax expenditure, which leads to further impoverishment among poor and vulnerable households.

Dawn reported on Sunday quoting the World Bank (WB) study that estimations of the marginal contributions of individual fiscal instruments — or the additional impact that individual fiscal instruments have on poverty or inequality when all other fiscal instruments are included — demonstrate that GST has the largest marginal contribution to the national poverty increase.

PHOTO: INVESTOPEDIA

The second-largest impact on inequality comes from pre-primary and primary education expenditures, the WB study said.

It also reported that the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), which provides cash to the poorest families on a monthly basis has the largest positive impact on inequality reduction. The BISP cash transfer demonstrates the largest marginal contribution to inequality reduction, it added. *—PTI*

CURBS GETTING TIGHTER

Trump pushes migrants to Mexican borders

MCALLEN, 25 MAY

Officers stand guard at the Krome Detention Centre, as a vigil goes on for those who died in ICE custody and others affected by mass deportations on Sunday *PHOTO: X*

The Trump administration has continued releasing people charged with being in the country illegally to nongovernmental shelters along the US-Mexico border after telling those organisations that providing migrants with temporary housing and other aid may violate a law used to prosecute smugglers.

Border shelters, which have long provided lodging, meals and transportation to the nearest bus station or airport, were rattled by a letter from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that raised "significant concerns" about potentially illegal activity and demanded detailed information in a wide-ranging investigation.

FEMA suggested shelters may have committed felony offenses against bringing people across the border illegally or transporting them within the United States.

"It was pretty scary. I'm not going to lie," said Rebecca Solloa, Executive Director of Catholic Charities Diocese of Laredo.

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement continued to ask shelters in Texas and Arizona to house people even after the 11 March letter, putting them in the awkward position of doing something that FEMA appeared to say is illegal.

After receiving the letter, Catholic Charities received eight to 10 people a day from ICE until financial losses forced it to close its shelter in the Texas border city on 25 April, Solloa said.

ICE's requests struck Solloa as a "little bit of a contradiction," but Catholic Charities agreed. Those released were from India, China, Pakistan, Turkey, and Central and South America.

Similarly, the Holding Institute Community, also in Laredo, has been taking about 20 families a week from ICE's family detention centres in Dilley and Karnes City, Texas, Executive Director Michael Smith said. They come from Russia, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Papua New Guinea and China. Annunciation House in El Paso, Texas, has been receiving five to 10 people day from ICE, including from Honduras and Venezuela, said Ruben Garcia, its executive director.

The releases show how border shelters have often maintained close relations with federal immigration authorities at the ground level, even when senior officials publicly criticise them. *—PTI*

Venezuelans to vote amid poll boycott calls

CARACAS, 25 MAY

Venezuelan voters have been summoned to choose lawmakers, governors and other elected officials Sunday against a backdrop of heightened government repression. But many are weighing whether to heed Opposition pleas to skip the polls and the ruling party's calls to participate.

The election will be the first to allow broad voter participation since last year's Presidential contest, which President Nicolas Maduro claimed to have won despite credible evidence to the contrary. It will take place two days after his government detained dozens of people, including a prominent Opposition leader, and linked them to an alleged plot to hinder the vote.

Participation, in the eyes of the opposition, legitimises Maduro's claim to power and his government's repressive apparatus, which after the July Presidential election detained more than 2,000 people including protesters, poll workers, political activists and minors, to quash dissent. *—PTI*

The election will be the first to allow broad voter participation since last year's Presidential contest *PHOTO: X@THOMASVLINGE*

IPO-bound NSDL reports rise in net profit by 4.7%

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

IPO-bound National Securities Depository Ltd (NSDL) on Sunday reported a 4.77 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 83.3 crore for the three months ended March 2025. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 79.50 crore in the same quarter of the preceding fiscal. Its total income rose 9.94 per cent to Rs 394 crore in the quarter under review from Rs 358 crore in the January-March quarter of 2023-24, NSDL said in a statement. For the full fiscal year, the depository's net profit surged 24.57 per cent to Rs 343 crore and total income rose 12.41 per cent to Rs 1,535 crore over FY24. The depository's board of directors has recommended a final dividend of Rs 2 per equity share for FY2024-25. *—PTI*

Four main-board IPOs to hit D-Street for ₹6,600 cr

New listings reveal a shift as only 12 firms offer IPOs in 2025

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

PHOTO: FREEPIK

The initial public offering (IPO) lane will be busy next week, with four main-line companies, including Leela Palaces Hotels & Resorts operator Schloss Bangalore Ltd and Aegis Vopak Terminals tapping the primary market to raise over Rs 6,600 crore collectively.

Other public issues scheduled for the week are Prostar Info Systems and Scoda Tubes.

Additionally, D-Street will witness the debut of two firms, including Borana Weaves and Belrise Industries, expected to list on 28 and 29 May, respectively.

Overall, there has been a slowdown in new listings as only 12 firms came out with their IPOs in 2025 so far owing to volatility in the equity market due to a combination of global and domestic factors.

This shift followed a remarkable 2024, in which 91 maiden public issues collectively raised Rs 1.6 lakh crore, driven by robust retail participation, a resilient economy, and booming private capital expenditure.

According to Axis Capital IPO Market Update May 2025, 57 companies have received final observations from the markets regulator, and another 74 firms are awaiting Sebi's final observations, which is necessary to float public issues.

For Schloss Bangalore, the company's Rs 3,500-crore IPO is a combination of a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 2,500 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of stocks valued at Rs 1,000 crore by promoter Project Ballet Bangalore Holdings (DIFC) Pvt Ltd.

Aegis Vopak Terminals, a subsidiary of Aegis Logistics Ltd, aims to raise Rs 2,800 crore from a fresh issue of equity shares.

Stainless steel tubes and pipes manufacturer Scoda Tubes' IPO is entirely a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 220 crore with no OFS component.

Prostarm Info Systems intends to utilise Rs 72.50 crore of the total IPO proceeds towards funding capital requirements of the company.

The equity shares of these four companies are listed on the BSE and NSE. *— PTI*

RIL HIT HARDEST

Mcap of 6 top firms down by ₹78.1K crore

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

The combined market valuation of six of the top-10 most valued firms eroded by Rs 78,166.08 crore last week, with Reliance Industries taking the biggest hit, in line with weak trends in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark dropped 609.51 points or 0.74 per cent and the Nifty declined 166.65 points or 0.66 per cent.

While Reliance Industries, TCS, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys and Hindustan Unilever were the laggards, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finance and ITC were the gainers from the top-10 pack.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries declined by Rs 40,800.4 crore to Rs 19,30,339.56 crore.

Tata Consultancy Services' valuation dropped by Rs 17,710.54 crore to Rs 12,71,395.95 crore.

The valuation of Infosys went lower by Rs 10,488.58 crore to Rs 6,49,876.91 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever eroded by Rs 5,462.8 crore to Rs 5,53,974.88 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of ICICI Bank edged down by Rs 2,454.31 crore to Rs 10,33,868.01 crore and that of State Bank of India dipped by Rs 1,249.45 crore to Rs 7,05,446.59 crore. However, the mcap of Bharti Airtel jumped Rs 10,121.24 crore to Rs 10,44,682.72 crore. The valuation of Bajaj Finance surged Rs 4,548.87 crore to Rs 5,74,207.54 crore and that of ITC climbed Rs 875.99 crore to Rs 5,45,991.05 crore. The mcap of HDFC Bank went up by Rs 399.93 crore to Rs 14,80,723.47 crore. *— PTI*

Tata Motors seeks to regain 50% of EV market share

PHOTO: FB

MUMBAI, 25 MAY

Tata Motors, the leader in the domestic electric passenger vehicle (EPV) segment, is seeking to regain its market share of 50 per cent in the mid-to-long term through expansion and renewal of its product portfolio, said a top company official. With the domestic EPV market fragmenting into four segments on the basis of price points, the company will be entering the above Rs 20 lakh category with its upcoming Harrier.ev and Sierra.ev, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicle and Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Managing Director Shailesh Chandra told PTI here in an interview. The company is working to make the total cost of ownership of its EVs in the fleet segment comparable to that of CNG vehicles to regain volumes, he added. *—PTI*

RBI's bumper dividend eases govt's fiscal position: SBI report

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

- AFinance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's budget for 2025-26 initially projected a cumulative dividend income of Rs 2.56 lakh crore from the RBI and public sector financial institutions. With the RBI's substantial transfer, this figure is now set to exceed earlier estimates

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) unprecedented dividend of approximately Rs 2.7 lakh crore is expected to enhance the government's fiscal position, facilitating growth in the world's fourth-largest economy, according to economists at the State Bank of India (SBI).

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's budget for 2025-26 initially projected a cumulative dividend income of Rs 2.56 lakh crore from the RBI and public sector financial institutions. With the RBI's substantial transfer, this figure is now set to exceed earlier estimates.

The SBI report indicates that the fiscal deficit may decline by 20 basis points from the previously budgeted level, bringing it down to 4.2 per cent of GDP. Alternatively, it could enable additional government spending of around Rs 70,000 crore, assuming other factors remain constant.

The RBI announced a record Rs 2.69 lakh crore dividend for the financial year 2024-25, a notable increase of 27.4 per cent from the Rs 2.11 lakh crore transferred in the previous fiscal year. This rise follows adjustments in the contingency risk buffers that the central bank can maintain. The report attributes the RBI's surplus payout to robust dollar sales, increased foreign exchange gains, and steady interest income growth. In January, the RBI was the leading seller of foreign exchange reserves. *— PTI*

India's forex reserves come down by $4.8B

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

India's foreign exchange reserves experienced a substantial decline of USD 4.888 billion, settling at USD 685.729 billion for the week ending 16 May, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Despite this drop, reserves are estimated to cover around 10-12 months of projected imports and remain close to the all-time high of USD 704.89 billion reached in September 2024.

Following the decline, forex reserves had recently shown signs of recovery, having risen for eight consecutive weeks. The latest RBI figures reveal that foreign currency assets, the largest component of these reserves, stand at USD 581.652 billion. *— PTI*

'MACROECONOMIC DATA, GLOBAL CUES TO DRIVE MKTS THIS WEEK'

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

The equity market's movement this week is expected to be influenced by a range of macroeconomic data announcements, global trends, and foreign investor trading activity, analysts have stated.

Last week, the stock markets ended on a subdued note as investors wrestled with global uncertainties. Ajit Mishra, Senior Vice President of Research at Religare Broking Ltd, noted that the market's modest performance was partly due to rising US bond yields and concerns regarding the US's escalating debt burden, leading to foreign portfolio outflows that exerted pressure on emerging markets, including India. Investors are also expected to monitor monsoon developments closely. *— PTI*

Airtel offers joint telecom anti-fraud initiative

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Airtel has reached out to Reliance Jio and Vodafone Idea with a proposal for a collaborative initiative aimed at combating the rising tide of telecom fraud and scams affecting consumers. The telco has urged all operators to work together in addressing the escalating threat posed by cyber criminals, citing a staggering 1.7 million cybercrime complaints in India during the first nine months of 2024, which have resulted in financial losses exceeding Rs 11,000 crore.

In letters to the Telecom Secretary, Neeraj Mittal, and Trai Chairman, Anil Kumar Lahoti, Airtel pointed out that fraud tactics have become increasingly sophisticated, employing phishing links, fake loan offers, and fraudulent payment pages. In response, Airtel has been rolling out a fraud detection solution across various OTT communication platforms, including WhatsApp and Facebook.

In its latest correspondence, Airtel proposed the launch of a Joint Telecom Fraud Initiative by 14 May, 2025, to facilitate real-time fraud intelligence sharing and cross-network coordination. The telco had previously advocated for collaborative measures to tackle unsolicited commercial communications (UCC), suggesting the establishment of a centralised data-sharing platform to enhance proactive monitoring and safeguard legitimate enterprise services. *— PTI*

Northeast gets investment proposals of ₹4.3L cr: Scindia

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

The DoNER has created eight high-level task forces, allowing each state to chart its own roadmap **PHOTO: X/ Jyotiraditya M. Scindi**

The two-day Rising Northeast Investors Summit, where investment potentials of the northeastern states were showcased, could draw an unprecedented Rs 4.3 lakh crore worth of investment proposals to the region, Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said.

The summit, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was held here on May 23-24 where chief ministers of all the northeastern states, Union ministers, industry leaders, diplomats and others took part.

Scindia, the Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), said the ministry has created eight high-level task forces across key sectors – agriculture, sports, investment promotion, tourism, economic corridors, infrastructure, textiles and handicrafts, and animal husbandry – allowing each state to chart its own roadmap, according to an official statement.

He said the DoNER ministry has been holding discussions with different stakeholders, including investors, foreign diplomats and ambassadors, encouraging them to explore investment opportunities in the northeastern states.

In the last one year, the ministry led an extensive nationwide and international engagement effort in this direction, the statement said.

He said the summit drew Rs 4.3 lakh crore in investment interests, setting the stage for the Northeast to become India's next economic powerhouse. *— PTI*

Auto sector duty cut under FTA is nuanced

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

India's duty concession offer for the auto sector under the free trade agreement (FTA) with the UK is "very nuanced" with relaxations and quotas linked to engine capacity and vehicle prices, an official said.

India has included adequate safeguards in the agreement with the UK to protect its sensitive sectors and in the automobile segment, the import duty will be reduced over 10-15 years, the official said.

"The duty cut and quota depends on engine capacity and price of vehicles. A lot of nuances are there in the auto sector. India's offer to the UK is very nuanced," the official added.

India and the UK, on 6 May, announced the conclusion of negotiations for the trade pact that will lower tariffs on 99 per cent of Indian exports and would make it easier for British firms to export whisky, cars and other products to India, besides boosting the overall trade basket. The aim is to double the two-way commerce by 2030 from the present USD 60 billion. *— PTI*

NCLAT directs NCLT to act quick on JAG

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

The insolvency appellate tribunal has directed the NCLT to promptly decide on the stay of the process of inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) regarding two Jaiprakash Associates Group's (JAG) investments in Jaiprakash Power Venture and Jaypee Fertilisers & Industry. In an order on 29 April, 2025, the Allahabad bench of the National Company Law Tribunal stayed the process of inviting EoI by the Resolution Professional of debt-ridden Jaiprakash Associates Ltd (JAL), which is currently going through the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP). This order was immediately challenged by the National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd (NARCL), which is the assignee of 85 per cent of debts of the banks to JAL and the Resolution Professional (RP), before the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal. *—PTI*

Reddy's gets two observations from USFDA for API plant

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

Reddy's Laboratories has received Form 483 with two observations after the US health regulator inspected its API manufacturing plant in Telangana. The US Food & Drug Administration (USFDA) completed a GMP inspection at the company's active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) manufacturing facility (CTO-5) in Miryalaguda, Telangana, the Hyderabad-based drug maker said in late evening filing on Saturday. The USFDA inspected the plant from 19 to 24 May, 2025, it added. Form 483 is issued to a firm's management after an inspection when the investigator has observed any violation of the Food Drug and Cosmetic Act. *—PTI*

SHIFTING PRIORITIES

74% workers prefer long-term benefits

MUMBAI, 25 MAY

PHOTO: FREEPIK

With rising cost-of-living pressures and evolving workforce expectations, a report has revealed shifting priorities with 74 per cent of respondents saying they prefer a slightly lower salary with stronger long-term benefits.

Around 74 per cent of employees interviewed stated that they would choose a slightly lower salary in exchange for stronger long-term benefits such as health insurance, retirement planning, and education support, a report by staffing solutions and HR services provider Genius Consultants has revealed.

The report by Genius Consultants is based on inputs from 1,139 employees across sectors pan India.

It further found that currently only 32 per cent of employees felt that their current benefits package effectively supports their financial well-being, while over 61 per cent said their benefits were inadequate.

Over 54 per cent of employees interviewed said their company does not prioritise mental and financial health while implementing wellness programs, said the report.

Around 84 per cent of respondents have confirmed that flexible work options such as hybrid or remote arrangements will help them save and manage their finances more efficiently, it said.

This indicates a strong correlation between workplace flexibility and financial wellness, beyond productivity gains, added the report.

About 73 per cent of employees agreed that performance-based bonuses and incentives will significantly ease their current financial concerns, which revealed a growing preference for variable compensation that rewards individual performance and helps bridge income gaps, it stated. *— PTI*

Geopolitical uncertainties hit GCC job prospects

MUMBAI, 25 MAY

India's semiconductor design Global Capability Centers (GCCs) witnessed a 15 per cent decline in job openings in 2024–25, mainly due to ongoing geopolitical uncertainties and global supply chain disruptions, according to a report.

The report by talent solutions provider Careernet revealed open positions peaked in May 2024 with 3,760 jobs before gradually tapering off to 3,040 by January 2025 and closing the year at 3,181 in March 2025.

This reflects a measured slowdown of nearly 15 per cent year-on-year decline in active roles across India's top 50 semiconductor design GCCs.

Despite this moderation, the overall demand for niche skills in VLSI (Very Large Scale Integration), embedded systems, and RF/analogue design remained resilient, with mid-sized GCCs demonstrating greater hiring agility, it added.

Semiconductor design is a niche area with inherently less headcount compared to other tech functions, so fluctuations in hiring sentiment - especially from two or three major industry players - can significantly influence the overall semiconductor design job market.

The report is based on an analysis of India's top 50 semiconductor design GCCs in 2023–24 and 2024–25. *— PTI*

PHOTO: X

Josh Hazlewood rejoins RCB ahead of IPL playoffs

LUCKNOW, 25 MAY

Royal Challengers Bengaluru have got a massive boost ahead of the Indian Premier League playoffs with Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood rejoining the side two days before their final league match here on Tuesday. Hazlewood had returned home during the one-week break due to the suspension of the IPL in the wake of India-Pakistan military conflict and was also dealing with a shoulder niggle from which the right-arm pacer has recovered. "It's great to be back. A couple of weeks at home, I made the most of the last (as I) went up to Brisbane and bowled quite a few overs," Hazlewood said in a video posted by RCB on Sunday.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Was eagerly awaiting the call, says Karun Nair

JAIPUR, 25 MAY

Senior batter Karun Nair feels "proud and fortunate" at his return to the Indian Test team after a long gap of eight years and says he was "awaiting this call" having done well in the last 12-16 months in the domestic circuit. The 33-year-old Nair was on Saturday named in the 18-member Indian squad for the five-match Test tour of England beginning June 20 after scoring big runs in the 2004-05 season. He last played for India in 2017. "Happy and proud. Have been batting well in the last 12-16 months.—*PTI*

Gukesh is ready for another challenge, along with Erigaisi

STAVANGER, 25 MAY

Possessing the ability to trump the fiercest rivals in the classical chess style, world champion D Gukesh and Arjun Erigaisi will spearhead India's challenge at the Norway Chess tournament, where they will compete against the likes of Magnus Carlsen and Hikaru Nakamura from Monday. Norway Chess, comprising six players in the men's and women's sections and played in a double round-robin format, is one of the most prestigious events on the chess calendar. India will be represented in the women's section by two-time women's world rapid champion Koneru Humpy and R Vaishali.—*PTI*

Avani top Indian, as Sara wins Jabra Ladies Open

EVIAN-LES-BAINS, 25 MAY

With a final round card of two-under 69 helping her to tied-28, Avani Prashanth finished as the highest placed Indian player at the Jabra Ladies Open. India's other players were Hitaashee Bakshi and Tvesa at tied-34 and Diksha Dagar at tied-39. Czech player Sara Kouskova played a strong final round of four-under par to secure her first LET title by two shots over her closest competitor, Tan. Kouskova carded 67 for a 10-under total and two better than Shannon (68) at 8-under. Avani has had a strong season as she has missed cutting only twice this year in eight starts. Avani, a winner on her home Tour Hero Pro Golf Tour while being an amateur, has had three top-20 finishes in her rookie year.—*PTI*

Brevis, Conway fire CSK to 83-run win, dent GT's hopes

GT now depend on RCB (17 points) losing final match to LSG

AHMEDABAD, 25 MAY

Dewald Brevis smashed a 19-ball half-century against Gujarat Titans *PHOTO: PTI*

Gujarat Titans' hopes of a top-two finish in the IPL suffered a massive dent when they went down by 83 runs to Chennai Super Kings, who were powered by fifty-makers Devon Conway and Dewald Brevis, here on Sunday.

The Titans have 18 points after a full set of 14 league matches and are still on top of the table despite the Net Run Rate taking a nose dive after this big defeat.To maintain their position inside the top two, GT now requires Royal Challengers Bengaluru (17 points) to go down to Lucknow Super Giants in their final league match.It's important because either Mumbai Indians (16) or Punjab Kings (17 points) will overtake GT with a win from their face-off. Cutting back to the match, once asked to chase a stiff 231, the Titans floundered badly, losing in-form skipper Shubman Gill, Jos Buttler, and Sherfane Rutherford in the Power Play passage itself with just 35 runs on the board.

Earlier, seasoned Conway and promising Brevis produced fifties of contrasting character, laying the foundation for Chennai Super Kings' healthy 230 for five.Once the Super Kings elected to bat on a super hot afternoon, Conway and Brevis led the charge with a 52 off 35 balls, and a 23-ball 57 on a smooth pitch.

Dhoni breaks silence on future

The 43-year-old dropped himself in the batting order, getting to hit only a few balls, and could not make the desired impact this season.

So, a question about his future was inevitable after the

team's last league game here. Dhoni said lack of performance can never be his reason for taking the retirement decision. "If cricketers start retiring for their performance, some of them will retire at 22. I will go back to Ranchi, enjoy a few bike rides. I am not saying I am done, not saying I am coming back. I have the luxury of timing. Will think about it and then decide," he said.

Dhoni hoped that CSK would have a good season next year when Ruturaj Gaikwad returns from his injury and joked that only his skipper's age makes him look old.

"Ruturaj doesn't need to worry about too many things next season. —*PTI*

MI face Punjab Kings in a battle for the top-two finish

JAIPUR, 25 MAY

Mumbai Indians and Punjab Kings will be determined to give their all in the battle for a top-two finish when they face each other in their final league stage fixture of the Indian Premier League here on Monday.

As the four teamsGujarat Titans, Royal Challengers Bengaluru, MI, and PBKS, have sealed the IPL playoff spots much earlier than ever before, the remaining league matches will determine the final standings.

With 17 points, PBKS are currently placed second, but a defeat to MI will push them to the third or fourth spot, setting them up for the Eliminator on May 30.

Finishing in the top two seems tougher for PBKS as they not only need a win against a formidable MI outfit but also hope GT (18 points) and RCB (17 points) lose their respective final matches.

Thus, PBKS, who lost their previous game to Delhi Capitals, are in a must-win situation against MI in their push for a top-two finish.

For MI, their superior Net Run Rate among all four qualifying teams can be beneficial if they beat Punjab Kings and GT, and RCB lose their matches.

Nevertheless, Punjab

> **Everyone on his side gave their best performance in the IPL, even though they couldn't make it to the playoffs**
>
> -Sameer Rizvi, Delhi Capitals batter

MI VS PBKS

HEAD TO HEAD	
PLAYED:	32
MI Won:	17
PBKS Won:	15

MI vs PBKS Match starts at 7.30 pm IST

MALAYSIA MASTERS

Srikanth signals return to form with runner-up finish

KUALA LUMPUR, 25 MAY

Former world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth reached his first BWF World Tour final in six years, finishing runner-up at the Malaysia Masters Super 500 on Sunday, a result that could mark a turning point in his career.

The 32-year-old Indian, who had slumped to 82 in world rankings earlier this month, following a long spell of injuries and inconsistent performances, produced a gritty run from the qualifiers to the final in Kuala Lumpur before going down to China's world No. 4 Li Shi Feng 11-21, 9-21.

Srikanth, who became the first Indian to win four Superseries titles in a single year in 2017 and claimed a historic silver at the 2021 World Championships, had been out of the spotlight in recent seasons. However, his return to form drew praise even from the chair umpire. "I know my chair umpire was also asking Where have you been. I didn't know people missed me. But yeah, very happy to be back again," the former Thomas Cup-winning captain said. The result was his first BWF world tour final since the 2019 India Open and his best finish since 2021.

Asked if he missed the big stage, Srikanth said: "Yeah. So basically, again going back to 2001 when Gopi Bhaiya had won the All England. —*PTI*

INDIA CAN'T WAIT TO RECTIFY MISTAKES: SUNIL CHHETRI

KOLKATA, 25 MAY

Talismanic India striker Sunil Chhetri on Sunday said that his side cannot wait to make amends of the mistakes they had committed in the goal-less draw against Bangladesh in the 2027 Asian Cup qualifying round contest in March.

India were held to a 0-0 draw by lower-ranked Bangladesh in their opening Group C match of the Asian Cup qualifying third round match on March 25 in Shillong, which left head coach Manolo Marquez fuming.

India are up against Hong Kong in their second match an away game on 10 June in Kowloon.

Chhetri said the match against Hong Kong will be a chance for the team to redeem itself. —*PTI*

BLUEPRINT TO WIN

Rohit, Virat and Ashwin have given us Test wins from home: Gill

MUMBAI, 25 MAY

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli had "very contrasting styles" of leadership, but the two iconic players, along with spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, have given the Indian team the "blueprint to win" Test series away from home, says new skipper Shubman Gill.

"(The) guys like Rohit bhai, Virat bhai and Ashwin bhai... they have given us a blueprint on how to tour away from home and win matches and series," Gill said in a video released by the BCCI on Sunday.

Gill was appointed India's captain in Tests. The first assignment for the 25-year-old is a five-Test series in England where he won't have stalwarts like Kohli and Rohit in the line-up.

"Yes, it's one thing to be able to deliver and execute, but because we have that blueprint, we know how to tour away from home and win matches and series," he added.

Gill said that while Kohli and Rohit had contrasting styles of leadership, they were also quite similar in style.

"When I was a kid, I was always inspired by the great and the legends of Indian cricket and (I've) been very fortunate to be able to play with so many of them, be it Virat bhai or Rohit bhai," he said.

"Both were very contrasting in terms of their style, but it was very inspiring to see both of them working towards a common goal. You want to be able to win as a captain, and your styles can be different, but they were very different, but also similar in their sense." —*PTI*

IJW hockey team beats Chile 2-1

ROSARIO, 25 MAY

The Indian junior women's hockey team came back from one goal down to beat Chile 2-1 and begin its campaign in the Four-Nation Tournament on a positive note here.

Sukhveer Kaur (39th minute) and Kanika Siwach (58th) netted the goals for India, while Javeria Saenz (20th) scored the only goal for Chile.

Javeria broke the deadlock in the 20th minute to give Chile the lead heading into the second half. India, however, equalised in the 3rd quarter, courtesy of Sukhveer in the 39th minute. Kanika then scored the winning goal in the 58th minute to ensure India's victory. —*PTI*

Jr Shooting WC: Another double podium for India

NEW DELHI, 25 MAY

India bagged a silver and bronze in the 10M air rifle mixed team event at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Junior World Cup in Suhl, Germany, on Sunday. It was India's second double podium finish in the tournament in two days.

Naraen Pranav and Khyaty Chaudhary won silver while Himanshu and Shambhavi Kshirsagar clinched bronze, as India's medals tally reached double figures (two gold, four silver, four bronze) with two more finals coming up on the final day on Monday.

The pair of Khyaty and Naraen shot 631.0 in the 38-team qualifying round to finish second and earn a shot at gold against the crack Chinese pair of Huang Yuting (Olympic champion in the event, double Olympic medalist and senior air rifle world champion) and Huang Liwanlin (the junior air rifle world champion), who topped the field with a combined 632.6. The Indians fought valiantly in the final, levelling things back every time the Chinese threatened to pull away and did so right till the end over 14 series of single shots, going into the 15th series tied honourably at 14 points apiece. —*PTI*

Marco wins British MotoGP 2025

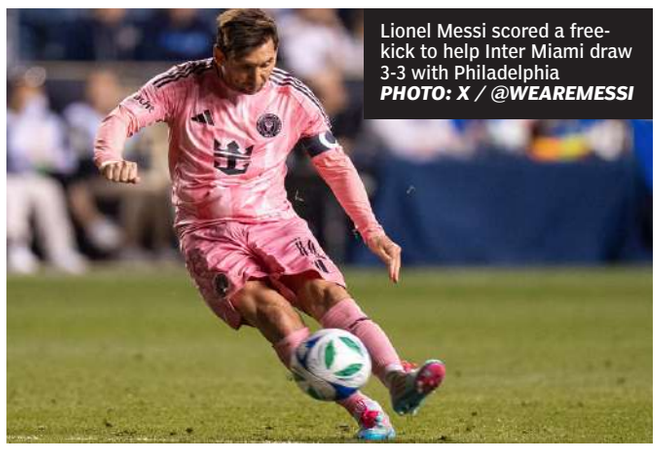
LONDON, 25 MAY

Marco Bezzecchi won a chaotic British Grand Prix on Sunday for Aprilia's first victory of the season in a race that was initially red flagged for an oil spill and riders crashed or retired while in the lead. The victory was a first for Aprilia since the Grand Prix of the Americas last year. LCR Honda's Johann Zarco came second, and Ducati's Marc pipped Franco Morbidelli to finish third and extend his lead in the world championship. —*PTI*

BREATHTAKING FREE-KICK

Miami shows soul, fight in Messi-inspired rally

LONDON, 22 JAN



Lionel Messi scored a free-kick to help Inter Miami draw 3-3 with Philadelphia *PHOTO: X / @WEAREMESSI*

Inter Miami fought back from 3-1 down to grab a 3-3 draw at MLS Eastern Conference leaders the Philadelphia Union on Saturday, thanks to a stoppage-time leveller from substitute Telasco Segovia.

Israeli forward Tai Baribo scored twice for Philadelphia to give them the two-goal advantage, but Lionel Messi gave Miami hope with an 87th-minute free-kick before Venezuelan Segovia dramatically grabbed the point.

Quinn Sullivan, called up this week by Mauricio Pochettino to the US national team squad, fired Philadelphia ahead in the seventh minute with a sweet strike after Miami's defence had failed to close down.

Baribo made it 2-0 with an instinctive finish in the 44th minute as Miami's defensive troubles continued.

The visitors got a foothold in the game in the 60th minute when Noah Allen floated in a cross from the left, which was met by a firm header from Argentine Tadeo Allende.

But Philadelphia restored their two-goal cushion when, from a long throw, Miami were unable to clear and Jean-Jacques Danley pounced on the loose ball and Baribo fired home.

Messi beat Union keeper Andrew Rick with a characteristically well-driven free-kick for his sixth goal of the season, three minutes from the end of regulation time, to set up a frantic finale. —*PTI*

Stuttgart beats Arminia 4-2 in German Cup final

BERLIN, 25 MAY

Enzo Millot

Stuttgart ruthlessly capitalized on errors in Arminia Bielefeld's defense to win the German Cup with a 4-2 victory in the final on Saturday.

C scored twice and Germany forward Nick Woltemade and Deniz Undav got the others as Stuttgart claimed their fourth German Cup win and the first since 1997. Bielefeld, the third-division champion, were playing in the final for the first time as only the fourth representative from that division to ever reach German soccer's end-of-season showpiece. But there was no fairytale ending for the team's American captain, Mael Corboz, after he helped the team knock out defending champion Bayer Leverkusen in the semifinals and a host of Bundesliga clubs en route to the final.

Substitute Julian Kania scored a late consolation goal, a minute before Josha Vagnoman's own goal, to get the Bielefeld fans singing again before the end. —*PTI*